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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/764,579	01/27/2004	Yoichi Sakamoto	00862.023421.	9013

5514 7590 06/19/2009

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EXAMINER	
RILEY, MARCUS T	

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2625	

MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
06/19/2009	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/764,579	SAKAMOTO, YOICHI	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	MARCUS T. RILEY	2625	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE *3* MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *24 March 2009*.

2a)☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☐ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1-16* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) *3-5, 9-11 & 15* is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1,2,6-8,12-14 & 16* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☒ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date *08/19/2004; 04/30/2007; 08/29/2007; 11/13/2007*.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

1. This office action is responsive to applicant's remarks received on March 24, 2009. **Claims 1-16** remain pending. **Claims 3-5, 9-11 &15** have been cancelled.

Response to Arguments

2. Applicant's arguments with respect to amended **claims 1, 2, 6-8, 12 & 14** filed on March 24, 2009 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

A: Applicant's Remarks

For Applicant's Remarks see "Applicant Arguments/Remarks Made in an Amendment" filed on March 24, 2009.

A: Examiner's Response

Applicant argues that Kawamoto either alone or in combination with Lung and Horiuchi does not discloses, teaches or suggests predicting coded data amounts for respective printing color components based on a designated table and the sizes of halftone image areas and character/line image areas included in respective printing color components. Applicant also argues that Kawamoto either alone or in combination with Lung and Horiuchi does not discloses, teaches or suggests calculating code data amounts for the respective printing color components by counting data amounts of quantized halftone image areas and character/line image areas for respective printing color components in accordance with a designated table.

Examiner understands Applicant's argument but respectfully disagrees. Kawamoto either alone or in combination with Lung and Horiuchi discloses, teaches or suggests the Applicant's claimed invention. Horiuchi at column 1, lines 41-57 discloses, teaches or suggests predicting and calculating coded data amounts for respective printing color components based on a designated table and the sizes of halftone image areas and character/line image areas included in respective printing color components and by counting data amounts of quantized halftone image areas and character/line image areas for respective printing color components in accordance with a designated table. Horiuchi specifically prints color images having half-tones and hues. Horiuchi is able to reproduce picture images with half-tones and hues closely similar to the original in at least sixteen steps of gradations as designated. The size of the ink drops of Horiuchi are practically limited from 100 to 180.mu. in size so that images with half-tones in sufficient steps of gradation are hardly obtainable. Thus, as predicted or calculated by Horiuchi, it is proposed to vary the number of ink dots appearing on a dot matrix having n possible positions in the row and m possible position in the column (n and m being integers) for one picture element so as to reproduce images with half-tones in a sufficiently large number of steps of gradation. Thus, Kawamoto either alone or in combination with Lung and Horiuchi discloses, teaches or suggests the Applicant's claimed invention

As a result, claim 1, 6 & 12 are not allowable over the applied references. In addition, each of independent claims 8 and 14 provide at least for predicting coded data amounts for respective printing color components based on a designated table and the sizes of halftone image areas and character/line image areas included in respective printing color components. Accordingly, claims 8 and 14 are also not allowable over Kawamoto, Lung and Horiuchi for at

least the above-discussed reasons. The other claims in the application are each dependent from the independent claims and are also not allowable over the applied references. Accordingly, Applicant's application is not in condition for allowance.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

(The previous claim rejection is withdrawn in light of the applicant's amendments.)

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. **Claims 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 12-14 & 16** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kawamoto '457 (US 6,151,457, hereinafter Kawamoto '457) in combination with Lung et al. (US 5,533,175) as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view Horiuchi et al. (US 4,413,275 hereinafter, Horiuchi '275).

Regarding claim 1; Kawamoto '457 discloses a printing system including an information processing apparatus which outputs print data and a printing apparatus which receives the print data from said information processing apparatus wherein said information processing apparatus comprises (See Figure 1where #110 and #120 each include scanner unit, a print engine and a control unit.):

generation unit configured to generate image data for respective printing color components of an image based on data to be print-outputted delivered from higher processing (*"Each image forming apparatus includes an image* ***scanner that scans in an original document so as to generate image data****, an* ***image processing unit for processing the image data****... an interface unit that transmits the encoded image data and receives image data from other image forming apparatuses, ...* ***and a printing unit for printing the decoded image data.****"* column 2, line 8-10);

coding unit configured to compress-encode the quantized image data for the respective printing color components generated by said generation unit (*"Each image forming apparatus includes an image scanner that* ***scans in an original document so as to generate image data****... **an encoding unit to encode the processed image data**, an interface unit that transmits the encoded image data and receives image data from other image forming apparatuses, **a memory unit for storing the encoded image data received by the interface unit, a decoding unit to decode the encoded image data stored in the memory unit,** and **a printing unit for printing the decoded image data.**"* column 2, line 11-12);

plural decoding units, independently provided for the respective printing color components, configured to decode coded data stored in the memory areas to image data (*"...an* ***encoding unit to encode*** *the processed image data, an interface unit that* ***transmits the encoded image*** *data and receives image data from other image forming apparatuses, a memory unit for storing the* ***encoded image data*** *received by the interface unit,* ***a decoding unit to decode the encoded image data stored in the memory unit, and a printing unit for printing the decoded image data.****"* column 2, lines 8-22);

printing unit configured to print the image data for respective color components decoded by said plural decoding print on a sheet (*"...an* ***encoding unit to encode*** *the processed image data, an interface unit that* ***transmits the encoded image*** *data and receives image data from other image forming apparatuses, a memory unit for storing the* ***encoded image data*** *received by the interface unit,* ***a decoding unit to decode the encoded image data stored in the memory unit, and a printing unit for printing the decoded image data.****"* column 2, lines 8-22);

a reception buffer (*"Additionally, in the present embodiment, a command transfer unit 70-5* ***comprising a transmission buffer and a reception buffer is provided*** *in the image transfer unit 70."* column 8, lines 17-19);

Kawamoto '457 does not expressly discloses generating memory allocation ratio information based on a ratio of the predicted coded data amounts for the respective printing color components coded by said coding means and notifying said printing apparatus of the memory allocation ratio information so that said printing apparatus allocates memory areas for respective color components; and output means for, after said notification means notifies said printing apparatus of the memory allocation ratio information outputting the coded image data of the respective printing color components coded by said coding means to said printing apparatus; memory allocation means for receiving the memory allocation information notified by said notification means and allocating in accordance with the received memory allocation ratio information, memory areas for respective color components in the reception buffer so that the memory sizes of each memory areas correspond to ratios of the predicted coded data amounts for the respective printing color components; receiving means for, after said memory allocation means allocates memory areas, receiving coded image data for respective color components and storing the received coded image data of respective color components into respective allocated memory areas.

Lung '175 discloses generating memory allocation ratio information based on a ratio of the predicted coded data amounts for the respective printing color components coded by said coding unit and notifying said printing apparatus of the memory allocation ratio information so that said printing apparatus allocates memory areas for respective color components (*"...object is to* ***minimize the amount of memory needed on board the printer controller by allocating memory access cycles*** *between the*

processing units within the printer controller *to achieve maximum throughput"* column 3, lines 44-47); See also (*"To summarize, if one half megabyte of compressed data is* ***sent to the printer controller****, the decompressor in the printer controller accesses about 2.5 megabyte of information to decompress the data into one megabyte of video data, and the serializer sends this one megabyte of information, which is about one printed page, to the printer engine. So the* ***optimum speed allocation and memory bandwidth allocation ratio for this case is: Hr:Dr:Vr=1:5:2*** *Since the local CPU and memory refresh logic also consume a small portion of memory bandwidth,* ***some memory bandwidth should be allocated for local CPU and memory*** *refresh logic."* column 9, lines 11-22); See also(*"... **commands are encoded into print commands 296** which can be parsed by the dispatcher 22.* ***Both the print commands*** *and bit strings are* ***assembled by the printer driver 297, and sent to the printer****."* column 6, lines 10-13);

an output unit configured to after said notification unit notifies said printing apparatus of the memory allocation ratio information output the coded image data of the respective printing color components coded by said coding unit to said printing apparatus (*" If the* ***buffered print data is bit map data, then the parser will signal the DMA unit 33****. The DMA unit is responsible for asserting a DMA request signal to the memory arbiter (not shown), and when granted,* ***generates a memory cycle to move the buffered print data into the raw bit map buffer*** *The dispatcher generates an* ***interrupt to the CPU of the controller when a print command is received****. For executing the interrupt routine, the CPU reads in the print command buffered by the host interface. The CPU* ***determines if the print command is to be executed immediately or be buffered in the print command buffer****. A print command saved in the print command buffer* ***will be fetched and executed by the CPU according to the print operation flow****."* column 6, lines 41-55).

memory allocation unit configured to receive the memory allocation information notified by said notification unit and allocating in accordance with the received memory allocation ratio information, memory areas for respective color components in the reception buffer so that the memory sizes of each memory areas correspond to ratios of the predicted coded data amounts for the respective printing color components (*"...object is to* ***minimize the amount of memory needed on board the printer controller by allocating memory access cycles*** *between the* ***processing units within the printer controller*** *to achieve maximum throughput"* column 3, lines 44-47); See also (*"To summarize, if one half megabyte of compressed data is* ***sent to***

the printer controller, *the decompressor in the printer controller accesses about 2.5 megabyte of information to decompress the data into one megabyte of video data, and the serializer sends this one megabyte of information, which is about one printed page, to the printer engine. So the* ***optimum speed allocation and memory bandwidth allocation ratio for this case is: Hr:Dr:Vr=1:5:2*** *Since the local CPU and memory refresh logic also consume a small portion of memory bandwidth,* ***some memory bandwidth should be allocated for local CPU and memory*** *refresh logic."* column 9, lines 11-22); See also (*"... **commands are encoded into print commands 296** which can be parsed by the dispatcher 22. **Both the print commands** and bit strings are **assembled by the printer driver 297, and sent to the printer.**"* column 6, lines 10-13);

receiving unit configured to receive after said memory allocation unit allocates memory areas, receive coded image data for respective color components and storing the received coded image data of respective color components into respective allocated memory areas (*"... **commands are encoded into print commands 296** which can be parsed by the dispatcher 22. **Both the print commands** and bit strings are **assembled by the printer driver 297, and sent to the printer.**"* column 6, lines 10-13); See also (*" If the **buffered print data is bit map data, then the parser will signal the DMA unit 33.** The DMA unit is responsible for asserting a DMA request signal to the memory arbiter (not shown), and when granted, **generates a memory cycle to move the buffered print data into the raw bit map buffer** The dispatcher generates an **interrupt to the CPU of the controller when a print command is received.**."* column 6, lines 41-52).

Kawamoto '457 and Lung '175 are combinable because they are from same field of endeavor of printing systems (*"The present invention relates generally to computerized printing systems and methods..."* Lung '175 at column 1, lines 6-7).

At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to modify the printing apparatus as taught by Kawamoto '457 by adding a printing apparatus with a memory allocation ratio as taught by Lung '175. The motivation for doing so would have been to provide a printer controller that can provide high performance at a low cost.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to combine Kawamoto '457 with Lung '175 to obtain the invention as specified in claim 1.

Kawamoto '457 as modified does not expressly disclose printing a color image on a sheet; storage means for storing a plurality of tables for defining a set of dither matrix patterns used for character/line image and halftone image for each color component; designation means for designing a table among the plurality of tables; and quantizing the generated image data for respective printing color components using dither matrixes specified by the table designated by said designation unit; notification means for predicting coded data amounts for the respective printing color components based on the table designated by said designation means and the sizes of halftone image areas and character/line image areas included in the respective color components.

Horiuchi '275 discloses printing a color image on a sheet (*"The present invention relates to an* ***ink-jet color printing apparatus for forming****, that is, painting color images with several kinds of colored inks and more particularly to an apparatus which is suitable for* ***painting color images having half tones such as a color photograph.****,"* column 1, line 5-9);

a storage unit configured to store a plurality of tables for defining a set of dither matrix patterns used for character/line image and halftone image for each color component (*"****Color density signals of three primary colors for each picture element stored or memorized temporarily in the line buffer memory 37*** *are fed to the UCR circuit 41. Yellow color density signals extracted from the UCR circuit 41 are decoded by a decoder 91 to address a table in a* ***table memory 92 wherein dot patterns to be formed according to color densities are previously stored in the form of combinations of positions of matrix cell*** *and dot signals (according to the voltage with which an ink-jet head is driven)."* column 10, lines 1-10);

designation unit configured to designate a table among the plurality of tables (*"In each of the dot pattern generators 45 to 48, the locations and sizes of the ink dots to be depicted in a dot matrix having n x m, for instance 3x3, possible positions* ***for constructing an image element are determined in accordance with color density signals by referring to a predetermined table.*** *"* column 6, lines 41-46);

and quantizing the generated image data for respective printing color components using dither matrixes specified by the table designated by said designation unit (*"In each of the dot pattern generators 45 to 48, the locations and sizes of the ink dots to be* ***depicted in a dot matrix having n x m, for instance 3x3, possible positions for constructing an image element are determined in accordance with color density signals by referring to a predetermined table.*** *Thus the dot pattern generator 45, when a series of yellow color density signals are fed thereto, converts these into three series of yellow color dot signals. In the case of a dot matrix of 4.times.4 possible positions for an image element, a dot pattern generator for producing four series of color dot signals can be employed."* column 6, lines 41-52);

notification unit configured to predict coded data amounts for the respective printing color components based on the table designated by said designation unit and the sizes of halftone image areas and character/line image areas included in the respective color components (*"In the case of* ***printing color images having half-tones and hues such as color photographs****, it is necessary to be able to reproduce picture images with* ***half-tones and hues closely similar to the original in at least sixteen steps of gradations.*** *... In this type of ink-jet head, ink drops are practically limited from 100 to 180.mu. in size so that images with* ***half-tones in sufficient steps of gradation are hardly obtainable.*** *...it has been proposed to vary the number of ink dots appearing on a dot matrix having n possible positions in the row and m possible position in the column (n and m being integers) for one picture element* ***so as to reproduce images with half-tones in a sufficiently large number of steps of gradation.*** *"* column 1, lines 41-57);

Kawamoto '457 and Horiuchi '275 are combinable because they are from same field of endeavor of printing systems (*"The present invention relates to an ink-jet color printing apparatus for forming, that is, painting color images with several kinds of colored inks and more particularly to an apparatus which is suitable for painting color images having half tones such as a color photograph."* Horiuchi '275 at column 1, lines 5-9).

At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to modify the printing apparatus as taught by Kawamoto '457 by adding a printing apparatus for printing a color image on a sheet as taught by Horiuchi '275. The motivation for doing so would have been to provide an printing apparatus to colored ink-drops from being turbid and flowing. Therefore, it would have been obvious to combine Kawamoto '457 with Horiuchi '275 to obtain the invention as specified in claim 1.

Regarding claim 2; Kawamoto '457 as modified does not expressly disclose where respective areas of said reception buffer allocated for the respective printing color components are utilized as a ring buffer.

Horiuchi '275 discloses where respective areas of said reception buffer allocated for the respective printing color components are utilized as a ring buffer (*"**Signals of the color** image information read out from the memory device are processed by masking by the use of a non-linear polynomial in a CPU, **being converted into color density signals of primary colors, namely, yellow, magenta and cyan. The color density signals masked in a CPU are stored or memorized in four line buffer memories** and are then fed to a UCR circuit by which color density signals of yellow, magenta, cyan and black are generated."* column 2, lines 64-68 thru column 3, lines 1-4).

Kawamoto '457 and Horiuchi '275 are combinable because they are from same field of endeavor of printing systems (*"The present invention relates to an ink-jet color printing apparatus for forming, that is, painting color images with several kinds of colored inks and more particularly to an apparatus which is suitable for painting color images having half tones such as a color photograph."* Horiuchi '275 at column 1, lines 5-9).

At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to modify the printing apparatus as taught by Kawamoto '457 by adding a reception buffer utilized as a ring buffer for printing color components as taught by Horiuchi '275. The

motivation for doing so would have been to provide an printing apparatus to prevent colored ink-drops from being turbid and flowing. Therefore, it would have been obvious to combine Kawamoto '457 with Horiuchi '275 to obtain the invention as specified in claim 1.

Regarding claim 6; Independent claims 6 contains substantially similar features as that of claim 1. Thus, claim 6 is rejected on the same grounds as claim 1.

Regarding claim 7; Kawamoto '457 does not expressly disclose wherein said information process apparatus further comprises: request means for requesting status information of said reception buffer from said printing apparatus; determination means for determining whether or not next page compressed data for the respective printing color components can be stored in available areas of the reception buffer for the respective printing color components, based on the status information obtained by said request means; and control means for, if said determination means determines that the next page compressed data can be stored; deleting the memory allocation ratio information to be notified by said notification means and causing said output means to output the next page compressed data.

Lung '175 discloses wherein said information process apparatus further comprises: request unit configured to request status information of said reception buffer from said printing apparatus (*"The processing units of this invention, i.e. formatter and serializer,* ***operate by checking status of the buffers, and independently processing data contained in the buffers.....*** *"* column 4, lines 57-60); See also (*"The DMA unit is responsible for asserting a DMA* ***request signal to the memory arbiter (****not shown), and* ***when granted, generates a memory cycle to move the buffered print data into the raw bit map buffer.*** *"* column 6, lines 43-46).;

determination unit configured to determine whether or not next page compressed data for the respective printing color components can be stored in available areas of the reception buffer for the respective printing color components, based on the status information obtained by said request means (*" Print data delivered by the printer driver consists of a sequence of print commands and bit map data, and the dispatcher of the printer controller parses every byte of input data into either bit map data or a print command. For an identified unit of bit map data,* ***the dispatcher requests a memory cycle, and when granted, transfers the bit map data to raw bit map buffer through direct memory acces****s. For an identified print command, the dispatcher simply generates an interrupt to the CPU of the controller. By executing the interrupt routine, the CPU reads in the print command* ***and determines if it should be executed immediately or be stored in the print command buffer for later execution.****"* column 6, lines 16-27).

and control unit configured to, if said determination unit determines that the next page compressed data can be stored (*"The* ***printer controller receives drawing command****s from the host computer and converts the commands to bit map data. This conversion is called* ***"Rendering"****. Typically, data* ***equivalent to one page of information is rendered and stored in a bit map buffer****. This data is read by the engine interface of the controller and serialized* ***before sending out as video signal to the print engine for printing****."* column 1, lines 41-47).

delete the memory allocation ratio information to be notified by said notification unit and causing said output unit to output the next page compressed data (*"The* ***dispatching of raw bit map data is suspended when the raw bit map buffer allocated for storing compressed bit map data is full.*** *The optimally coupled data delivery rates for the host interface of the dispatcher and the formatter can minimize the memory size required for buffering the raw bit map data. The formatter translates the raw bit map data into video bit map data, and delivers the video bit map data at a speed required by the serializer.* ***The formatting of video bit map data is suspended when the video bit map buffer is full.*** *The serializer converts the parallel video bit map data to serial video data at the speed that* ***can cope with the printing rate of the majority of laser printer engines, and delivers video data to the marking engine in response to the operation status from the marking engine****.."* column4 , lines 30-47).

Kawamoto '457 and Lung '175 are combinable because they are from same field of endeavor of printing systems (*"The present invention relates generally to computerized printing systems and methods..."* Lung '175 at column 1, lines 6-7).

At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to modify the printing apparatus as taught by Kawamoto '457 by adding printing apparatus with an information process apparatus as taught by Lung '175. The motivation for doing so would have been to provide a printer controller that can provide high performance at a low cost. Therefore, it would have been obvious to combine Kawamoto '457 with Lung '175 to obtain the invention as specified in claim 61.

Regarding claim 8; Kawamoto '457 discloses an information processing apparatus, which is connectable to a printing apparatus in which sizes of reception buffer memory allocated for respective color components are changed in accordance with external instruction information, and which outputs print data to said printing apparatus, comprising (See Figure 1where #110 and #120 each include scanner unit, a print engine and a control unit.): See also (*"Additionally, in the present embodiment, a command transfer unit 70-5* ***comprising a transmission buffer and a reception buffer is provided*** *in the image transfer unit 70."* column 8, lines 17-19);

generation unit configured to generate image data for respective printing color components of an image based on data to be print-outputted delivered from higher processing (*"Each image forming apparatus includes an image* ***scanner that scans in an original document so as to generate image data****, an* ***image processing unit for processing the image data****... an interface unit that transmits the encoded image data and receives image data from other image forming apparatuses, ...* ***and a printing unit for printing the decoded image data****.."* column 2, line 8-10);

a coding unit configured to compress-encode the quantized image data for the respective printing color components generated by said generation unit (*"Each image forming apparatus includes an image scanner that* ***scans in an original document so as to generate image data****... an encoding unit to encode the processed* ***image data****, an interface unit that transmits the encoded image data and receives image data from other image forming apparatuses,* ***a memory unit for storing the encoded image data received by the interface unit, a decoding unit to decode the encoded image data stored in the memory unit,*** *and* ***a printing unit for printing the decoded image data.****"* column 2, line 11-12);

Kawamoto '457 does not expressly disclose generating memory allocation ratio information based on a ratio of the predicted coded data amounts for the respective printing color components coded by said coding means and notifying said printing apparatus of the memory allocation ratio information so that said printing apparatus allocates memory areas for respective color components; and output means for, after said notification means notifies said printing apparatus of the memory allocation ratio information outputting the coded image data of the respective printing color components coded by said coding means to said printing apparatus.

Lung '175 discloses generating memory allocation ratio information based on a ratio of the predicted coded data amounts for the respective printing color components coded by said coding means and notifying said printing apparatus of the memory allocation ratio information so that said printing apparatus allocates memory areas for respective color components (*"...object is to* ***minimize the amount of memory needed on board the printer controller by allocating memory access cycles*** *between the* ***processing units within the printer controller*** *to achieve maximum throughput"* column 3, lines 44-47); See also (*"To summarize, if one half megabyte of compressed data is* ***sent to the printer controller****, the decompressor in the printer controller accesses about 2.5 megabyte of information to decompress the data into one megabyte of video data, and the serializer sends this one megabyte of information, which is about one printed page, to the printer engine. So the* ***optimum speed allocation and memory bandwidth allocation ratio for this case is: Hr:Dr:Vr=1:5:2*** *Since the local CPU and memory refresh logic also*

consume a small portion of memory bandwidth, ***some memory bandwidth should be allocated for local CPU and memory*** *refresh logic."* column 9, lines 11-22); See also(*"... **commands are encoded into print commands 296** which can be parsed by the dispatcher 22.* ***Both the print commands*** *and bit strings are* ***assembled by the printer driver 297, and sent to the printer.***" column 6, lines 10-13);

an output unit configured to, after said notification unit notifies said printing apparatus of the memory allocation ratio information output the coded image data of the respective printing color components coded by said coding unit to said printing apparatus (*" If the* ***buffered print data is bit map data, then the parser will signal the DMA unit 33.*** *The DMA unit is responsible for asserting a DMA request signal to the memory arbiter (not shown), and when granted,* ***generates a memory cycle to move the buffered print data into the raw bit map buffer*** *The dispatcher generates an* ***interrupt to the CPU of the controller when a print command is received.*** *For executing the interrupt routine, the CPU reads in the print command* ***buffered*** *by the host interface. The CPU* ***determines if the print command is to be executed immediately or be buffered in the print command buffer.*** *A print command saved in the*

Kawamoto '457 and Lung '175 are combinable because they are from same field of endeavor of printing systems (*"The present invention relates generally to computerized printing systems and methods..."* Lung '175 at column 1, lines 6-7).

At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to modify the printing apparatus as taught by Kawamoto '457 by adding a printing apparatus with a memory allocation ratio as taught by Lung '175. The motivation for doing so would have been to provide a printer controller that can provide high performance at a low cost. Therefore, it would have been obvious to combine Kawamoto '457 with Lung '175 to obtain the invention as specified in claim 8.

Kawamoto '457 as modified does not expressly disclose storage means for storing a plurality of tables for defining a set of dither matrix patterns used for character/line image and

halftone image for each color component; designation means for designating a table among the plurality of tables; and quantizing the generated image data for respective printing color components using dither matrixes specified by the table designated by said designation means; notification means for predicting coded data amounts for the respective printing color components based on the table designated by said designation means and the sizes of halftone image areas and character/line image areas included in the image to be printed respective printing color components.

Horiuchi '275 discloses storage unit configured to store a plurality of tables for defining a set of dither matrix patterns used for character/line image and halftone image for each color component (*"**Color density signals of three primary colors for each picture element stored or memorized temporarily in the line buffer memory 37** are fed to the UCR circuit 41. Yellow color density signals extracted from the UCR circuit 41 are decoded by a decoder 91 to address a table in a **table memory 92 wherein dot patterns to be formed according to color densities are previously stored in the form of combinations of positions of matrix cell** and dot signals (according to the voltage with which an ink-jet head is driven)."* column 10, lines 1-10);

designation unit configured to designate a table among the plurality of tables (*"In each of the dot pattern generators 45 to 48, the locations and sizes of the ink dots to be depicted in a dot matrix having n x m, for instance 3x3, possible positions **for constructing an image element are determined in accordance with color density signals by referring to a predetermined table.**"* column 6, lines 41-46);

and quantizing the generated image data for respective printing color components using dither matrixes specified by the table designated by said designation unit (*"In each of the dot pattern generators 45 to 48, the locations and sizes of the ink dots to be **depicted in a dot matrix having n x m, for instance 3x3, possible positions for constructing an image element are determined in accordance with color density signals by referring to a predetermined table.** Thus the dot pattern generator 45, when a series of yellow color density signals are fed thereto, converts*

these into three series of yellow color dot signals. In the case of a dot matrix of 4.times.4 possible positions for an image element, a dot pattern generator for producing four series of color dot signals can be employed." column 6, lines 41-52);

notification unit configured to predict coded data amounts for the respective printing color components based on the table designated by said designation unit and the sizes of halftone image areas and character/line image areas included in the respective color components (*"In the case of* ***printing color images having half-tones and hues such as color photographs****, it is necessary to be able to reproduce picture images with* ***half-tones and hues closely similar to the original in at least sixteen steps of gradations.*** *... In this type of ink-jet head, ink drops are practically limited from 100 to 180.mu. in size so that images with* ***half-tones in sufficient steps of gradation are hardly obtainable.*** *...it has been proposed to vary the number of ink dots appearing on a dot matrix having n possible positions in the row and m possible position in the column (n and m being integers) for one picture element* ***so as to reproduce images with half-tones in a sufficiently large number of steps of gradation****."* column 1, lines 41-57);

Kawamoto '457 and Horiuchi '275 are combinable because they are from same field of endeavor of printing systems (*"The present invention relates to an ink-jet color printing apparatus for forming, that is, painting color images with several kinds of colored inks and more particularly to an apparatus which is suitable for painting color images having half tones such as a color photograph."* Horiuchi '275 at column 1, lines 5-9).

At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to modify the printing apparatus as taught by Kawamoto '457 by adding storage means for storing a plurality of tables as taught by Horiuchi '275. The motivation for doing so would have been to provide a printing apparatus to prevent colored ink-drops from being turbid and flowing. Therefore, it would have been obvious to combine Kawamoto '457 with Horiuchi '275 to obtain the invention as specified in claim 8.

Regarding claims 12 & 14; Independent claims 12 & 14 contain substantially similar features as that of claim 8. Thus, claim 12 &14 are rejected on the same grounds as claim 8.

Regarding claim 13; Claims 13 contains substantially similar features as that of claim 7. Thus, claim 13 is rejected on the same grounds as claim 7.

Regarding claim 16; Kawamoto '457 as modified does not expressly discloses a computer-readable medium that stores a computer program for causing a computer to implement the method.

Horiuchi '275 discloses a computer-readable medium that stores a computer program for causing a computer to implement the method (*"A conventional **mini-computer can be employed as the CPU described above for controlling the color image information** input unit 1 and printer 3, for controlling the **memorizing or reading out of the color image information, and for carrying out the various image processings**."* column 5, lines 30-35).

Kawamoto '457 and Horiuchi '275 are combinable because they are from same field of endeavor of printing systems (*"The present invention relates to an ink-jet color printing apparatus for forming, that is, painting color images with several kinds of colored inks and more particularly to an apparatus which is suitable for painting color images having half tones such as a color photograph."* Horiuchi '275 at column 1, lines 5-9).

At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to modify the printing apparatus as taught by Kawamoto '457 by adding a computer-readable medium that stores a computer program for causing a computer to implement the method as taught by Horiuchi '275. The motivation for doing so would have been to provide a printing apparatus which is simple in structure and which does not need a large scale time delaying circuit. Therefore, it would have been obvious to combine Kawamoto '457 with Horiuchi '275 to obtain the invention as specified in claim 14.

Examiner Notes

5. The Examiner cites particular columns and line numbers in the references as applied to the claims above for the convenience of the applicant. Although the specified citations are representative of the teachings in the art and are applied to the specific limitations within the individual claim, other passages and figures may apply as well. It is respectfully requested that, in preparing responses, the applicant fully considers the references in its entirety as potentially teaching all or part of the claimed invention, as well as the context of the passage as taught by the prior art or as disclosed by the Examiner.

Conclusion

6. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to MARCUS T. RILEY whose telephone number is (571)270-1581. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday, 7:30-5:00, est.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David K. Moore can be reached on 571-272-7437. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

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